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**THE EVOLUTION OF OPMS XXI:
THE NEED TO SPECIALIZE MILITARY
INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS**

BY

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The Evolution of OPMS XXI: The Need to Specialize Military Intelligence Officers

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ABSTRACT

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OPMS XXI allows for the career progression of the Army's functional specialists. It facilitates the development of commissioned officer functional specialists to fill critical positions at the Major, LTC, and Colonel levels. This study argues that OPMS XXI needs to be revised. It argues that the current MI officer career development as a part of the Operations Career Field (CF) falls short of developing the intelligence expertise required of intelligence staff officers (S2/G2) at the tactical level. It fails to develop officers capable of confidently exercising the skills required to integrate at the tactical level all of the elements embedded in the Intelligence cycle---the planning and directing of IEW operations; IEW collection operations; the processing of information and data; the production of intelligence; and the dissemination of this intelligence. It argues that the Army needs to develop tactical military intelligence officers that specialize in the application of intelligence for a military based on force projection and capable of operating across the entire spectrum of conflict. Specifically, tactical military operations in the 21st century will require a much greater level of specialized expertise within the intelligence career field, and that assessment and specialized development of intelligence staff officers (S2/G2) should begin at the time of promotion to the grade of captain and attendance to the advance course. It will suggest a career model for military intelligence officers that may be applicable to other functional areas as well.

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THE EVOLUTION OF OPMS XIX: THE NEED TO SPECIALIZE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS

"Robust All-Source Intelligence. A globally vigilant intelligence system that is able to operate in a complex environment with an increasing number of potential opponents and more sophisticated technology is critical. Our Armed Forces require the timely collection, evaluation, and assessment of a full range of geo-political, socio-economic, and military information throughout the full spectrum of conflict. Our intelligence system must be capable of maintaining its global warning capabilities even while focusing on one or more crises. It must overcome increasingly varied means of deception and protect and secure its information channels. It must respond to the warfighters' needs during compressed decision cycles, and accommodate "smart" and "brilliant" weapons systems that pass targeting information directly to weapons platforms. The technical ability to deliver large quantities of intelligence to all levels without overwhelming commanders and leaders has enormous promise. However, quality intelligence remains equally dependent upon subjective human judgment, from collection and processing to production and dissemination."¹

"The Army's mission is to fight and win the Nation's wars. But readiness today does not necessarily translate into readiness tomorrow. Tomorrow's readiness will require a significant commitment of resources and thoughtful planning. The Army needs to acquire the finest weapons and write the doctrine for using them effectively on the battlefield. It also needs to develop officers with the right skills, knowledge, and experience to meet unforeseen challenges of the 21st century. While the warfighting focus must never be obscured or diminished, the institutional Army has a simultaneous requirement for officers possessing other skills and expertise. Therefore, it is time to assess how we develop our officers with respect to the challenges of the world environment today and tomorrow."²

INTRODUCTION.

The Army's 10th Mountain Division has undergone four major operational deployments since the Persian Gulf War. Specifically, it deployed in support of relief operations in Florida during the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew, to Somalia in support of humanitarian and peace enforcement operations during Operation Restore Hope, to Haiti in support of Operation Uphold Democracy, and most recently a rotation to Bosnia as part of the Stabilization Force (SFOR). With the exception of the SFOR rotation, each was executed with relatively little forewarning. That is, deployment occurred at no more than 1-2 months from notification. The senior intelligence officers (SIO) for each of the battalions, brigades and the Division during these deployments were responsible for "the timely collection, evaluation, and assessment of a full range of geo-political, socio-economic, and military information throughout the full spectrum of conflict" for each of these operations, as envisioned in the National Military Strategy (NMS) above. Each of these officers were responsible for and expected to assess the threat situation, identify informational and intelligence gaps, integrate and synchronize intelligence collection

planning, monitor the execution of collection operations, process and analyze inputs from multiple sources, and provide timely, relevant, and accurate predictive intelligence for the commander. The SIO during these deployments was expected to be a functional expert; he or she was expected to be a specialist in managing and integrating the intelligence process. The senior intelligence officer (G2/J2) for the Division during most of the deployment to Somalia was an officer that had last served at the tactical level, fifteen years earlier, and never as an S2. The majority of his career had been spent in the strategic signals intelligence arena. Most of the senior intelligence officers (SIO) for the battalions and the brigades for each of these deployments were officers that had served in that capacity for no more than six months at the time of notification, and were to change positions within weeks upon redeployment. For most, the only practical application of the intelligence process prior to the deployment was as a student during their basic and advance courses. Some were lucky enough to serve as SIO during an NTC or JRTC rotation, allowing them to at least exercise the intelligence process, albeit without coming close to replicating the conditions found in actual operational environments.

Unfortunately, the career progression for MI officers is driven by the same career model as the Army's combat arms branches. Specifically, as members of the Operations career field (CF) MI officers must follow a command track. They must successfully complete those jobs that are directly related to preparing officers for command, and allow them to remain competitive for command and promotion. MI officers are also expected to be the experts at integrating the elements of the intelligence cycle in order to satisfy the intelligence requirements of the commander. The result is a career model that forces the Army to rotate MI officers to different positions on the average of every 12 months. Although military intelligence officers are increasingly expected to be specialists within their career fields as we enter the 21st century, the system that manages their careers does not sufficiently foster this specialization. Fortunately, with the exception of Somalia, most of the operations for U.S. "force projection" military have thus far been relatively benign or permissive in nature.

A little over six years ago, the Army underwent fundamental changes in the manner in which it manages its officer corps. The outcome of these changes was the implementation of the Officer Personnel Management System XXI, or what is commonly referred to as OPMS XXI. The task force responsible for developing the major components of this revised officer management system strongly advocated that OPMS XXI be a "living system", and that the Army cyclically review and adjust as necessary.³ The overall purpose of OPMS XXI is to ensure it remains responsive to officer leadership and management challenges in the 21st Century.⁴ The

fundamental changes found within OPMS XXI implement four distinctive career fields, established several new functional areas, and improved competitiveness of officers within each of the new career fields.⁵ One of the overarching goals of OPMS XXI was to create and improve career progression opportunities for specialists within the officer corps. Prior to OPMS XXI, the career progression of non-command track officers beyond the grade of captain was extremely limited. There was much concern from the Army's senior leadership during OPMS XXI development with regards to the need to retain the warfighting "muddy boots" culture. OPMS XXI struck a balance between preserving this culture and increasing career progression opportunities within specialty fields by essentially keeping all officers in Army basic branches until the grade of major. Essentially, the career of the Army's lieutenants and captains has not changed. The majority of these officers will spend between 12-18 months doing a specific job, and then move on to a different one. It will match Army requirements with the need to ensure every officer is given the opportunity to serve in specific branch critical assignments to include company command. The career path of the Army's junior officers will generally follow requisite assignments for the operations career field officer. They will be developed as generalists until they reach the grade of major, at which point they will be given the opportunity to become a specialist, with relatively the same opportunity for promotion that has historically belonged to the Operations (read command-track) career field. In essence, OPMS XXI allows for the career progression of the Army's functional specialists. It facilitates the development of commissioned officer functional specialists to fill critical positions at the major, LTC, and colonel levels.⁶

This paper argues that under OPMS XXI, the time for beginning this specialized development of military intelligence officers is too late in an officer's career, and there is the need for a greater degree of specialization within the Military Intelligence Corps basic branch. Specifically, military operations in the 21st century will require a much greater level of specialized expertise within the intelligence career field, and that assessment and specialized development of intelligence officers should begin at the time of promotion to the grade of captain and attendance to the advance course. The paper will make the argument that some of the goals established by the OPMS XXI Task Force will not be achieved for MI officers. It will review the typical career path for MI officers under OPMS XXI. Finally, it will suggest a career model for military intelligence officers that would better meet the overall intent of OPMS XXI.

TYPICAL MI OFFICER CAREER PATH.

LIEUTENANTS.

The career of a basic branch military intelligence officer begins as a 2d lieutenant at either the Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course (MIOBC) at Fort Huachuca Arizona, or as a branch detailed officer at one of the combat arms basic courses. Officer basic courses prepare officers for their first duty assignment and provide instruction on methods for training and leading individuals, teams, squads and platoons. The course also provides officers with a detailed understanding of equipment, tactics, organization and administration at the company level. Officers at the MIOBC also receive some basic instruction on the intelligence process, and those tasks critical to serving as an intelligence staff officer at the battalion and brigade level. Officers graduating from the MIOBC are assigned to tactical units (Corps and below), or echelon above corps (EAC) Intelligence and Security Command (INSCOM) troop units. Officers that are branch detailed to combat arms branches are normally assigned to division level units. Typical jobs include assistant battalion or brigade staff officers, platoon leaders, and company executive officers. Generally, lieutenants will serve no more than one year in any given job, and then move on to another. The primary driver for job rotation is the desire to provide every lieutenant an opportunity to lead soldiers as a platoon leader. Mathematically, MI lieutenants have to rotate no less than every year to ensure most are afforded this most critical opportunity. At the division level there are normally 25 to 35 MI lieutenants assigned depending on the Officer Distribution Plan (ODP), and whether it is a two or three brigade division. Every year, approximately one third of these officers will proceed to their advance courses. There are 7 to 10 platoon level leadership positions available for these 25 to 35 lieutenants. The rest of the authorized lieutenant positions are at the battalion or brigade level staffs. With the first three to four years spent within these "troop" level assignments, and the Army's intent of allowing its younger officers the opportunity to hold platoon-like leadership positions, the Army has no choice but to rotate each officer on at least an annual basis. The overall intent of these first years in the army is to "fully educate" officers on Army operations and military life, and build a solid foundation for future service".⁷

CAPTAINS.

Shortly after the release of the captains promotion list, at around the 4th year on active duty, most officers will receive orders to attend their basic branch advance course, or what now is referred to as the Captains Career Course. The curriculum at this course is broken down into two phases. The first phase is generally 18 weeks of branch specific technical and tactical

training with some integrated common core instruction. This training is designed to prepare officers to command and train at the company level, and to serve as staff officers at the battalion and brigade level. The second phase is a six-week TDY to Ft Leavenworth for attendance at the Combined Arms Staff Service School (CAS3). This training is focused on better refining the skills required to serve as a member of a staff.⁸ Following completion of the Captains Career Course, most officers will proceed back to "troop" units with the requirement to complete branch qualification (BQ). The overall intent of the company grade years is branch qualification, regardless of the functional and career field they will enter as majors. The value an officer brings to a specialized functional area is dependent on experience gained by leading soldiers and mastering basic branch skills.⁹ For military intelligence officers this equates to successful completion of any intelligence related staff position from tactical to national level organizations, and successful completion of company or detachment command.¹⁰ The BQ requirement of successful completion of company or detachment command is an absolute must to remain competitive for promotion to major and realistic consideration for attendance to resident Command and General Staff College (CGSC). In essence, every MI officer must command whether they really want to or not. If they want to be promoted to major and remain competitive, they must seek out, and successfully complete a command. At the division level, there are normally 20 to 25 captains assigned depending on the ODP, and whether it is a two or three brigade division. There are four or five companies available for these officers to command. Again, as with the job assignment pattern of the lieutenants, captains are normally being rotated to different positions about every 12 months. This is to ensure each deserving captain is given the opportunity to command.

The normal progression of MI captains within divisions is for them to serve at the division, brigade, or battalion as a staff intelligence officer, and then proceed to the MI battalion to await assumption of command. Most will move into one of the MI battalion staff positions such as the S1, S4, battalion maintenance officer (BMO), or as one of the assistant S3 officers. Most will have been given the opportunity to serve as battalion level intelligence staff officers (S2), but normally for no more than 12 months. The Command Training Centers (CTC) are the premier training opportunities for commanders and their staffs. Short of an operational deployment, these opportunities are the only real collective training environment for intelligence officers to train and exercise the intelligence process of collecting, analyzing and producing intelligence for the commander. The rotation schedule for the CTC is for every combat arms brigade and battalion to receive a CTC experience every two years. With staff intelligence officers turning

over every 12 months, only about half of them will get the opportunity to experience a rotation at one of the Army's major training centers (NTC, JRTC, CMTC).

An MI captain will normally spend 3-4 years in a division before assuming command. Most will have had three to four different positions during this tour by the time they take command. Unless a captain is found incompetent as a staff officer, all are given the opportunity to command. Each command tour averages about twelve months in length as with other positions. With some minor exceptions, the company command is usually the last position held prior to being reassigned by PERSCOM to what is commonly referred to as a "non-troop" assignment. These assignments are based on previous assignment patterns, relative manner of performance achieved, individual preferences, and Army requirements. These assignments range from branch specific or related, to branch immaterial to the beginning of functional area development.¹¹

MAJORS.

The primary zone for selection to the rank of major is normally near the 10th year of service. Immediately upon selection for promotion, officers are assigned their career field designation (CFD), and approximately 50% will be selected for attendance to the resident CGSC. With the exception of the combat arms branches (which will leave at least 50 percent of each cohort year group in the Operations career field (CF)), at least 60 percent of each YG will remain in the operations CF.¹² For MI branch, all CFD thus far have resulted in just under 75 percent of every YG being selected to remain in the Operations CF.¹³

As with company grade years, the majors' years and assignments will be focused on attaining branch qualification at that grade. For MI officers selected to remain in the Operations CF, BQ requirements are completion of CGSC (resident or non-resident), and successful completion in one of the following positions; group or brigade staff intelligence officer (S2), battalion/brigade/group level executive officer (XO) or operations officer (S3), Chief of the Analysis and Control Element (ACE) at the division level, or as a staff intelligence officer at any corps or above organization.¹⁴ At the division level this normally translates into one to two years as a division level staff officer within the G2 section, or as ACE chief, followed by selection to either the MI battalion XO or S3 position. The ODP does not support all of the authorizations/requirements for MI majors at the division level. Therefore priority is given to the division level staff positions and the MI battalion XO or S3 positions. Divisions are forced to fill brigade S2 positions with captains.

MI majors will normally spend no more than three years at the division level, rotating each year to a different staff position, with the XO/S3 positions being the last. As with company command being virtually a prerequisite for selection to major, in the Operations CF XO/S3 positions are a prerequisite for serious consideration for battalion command. In the last battalion command selection board, the selection rate for MI officers that had not served as either an XO or S3 was zero.¹⁵ Under OPMS XXI, these statistics will likely not change. The number of MI FG officers being assigned to divisions and corps has not changed under OPMS XXI. All majors assigned to division and corps level organizations have been assigned to the Operations career field. These officers are competing within the traditional "command track", competing for promotion and command with all officers assigned to the operations career field. All combat arms (CA) majors are still required to serve as either battalion/brigade XO or S3 to be considered BQ.¹⁶ In essence, every member of the Operations career field must successfully complete one of these positions to remain competitive for battalion command. Again, the net result is annual rotations of the officers to ensure they are able to successfully complete this requirement prior to the LTC promotion and battalion command selection boards.

LIEUTENANT COLONELS.

Under OPMS XXI, approximately 40 percent of each cohort year group for the Operations CF will be selected to command at the LTC level. These commands are found at the tactical level, MACOM level organizations not directly involved in combat operations, and institutional commands composed of garrison and USAREC organizations.¹⁷ Approximately 80% of the LTC level MI commands are at the tactical/INSCOM level. Specifically, they are intelligence related commands. The remainder has essentially no relation to intelligence or the intelligence process. Lieutenant colonels not selected to command will fill branch specific staff assignments from division to MACOM, Army, and joint level organizations. Of these, the division G2 is the most physically and intellectually demanding of MI positions at the LTC level. Most G2 positions are historically either filled by in-coming MI battalion commanders (as command preposition assignments), or by former battalion commanders. This later group will fill the G2 position as he or she awaits the results of the Senior Service College (SSC) board results. In both cases, they are required to rotate from the G2 position after about twelve months. BQ requirement for an MI LTC is to serve at least 24 months in any LTC or higher level MI coded position.¹⁸ A final note on the relevance of the command track within the Operations CF for MI officers is the fact that the chances of being selected to attend the SSC or being promoted to colonel without having successfully served as a battalion commander is

extremely limited at best. Without command, serving successfully as a G2 has no bearing on an MI officer's competitiveness for SSC or promotion to colonel, regardless of the importance the Army places on this position or the well-known fact that it is more demanding than command.

In summarizing the typical MI officer career path, one general assignment feature remains relatively common throughout. The average turnover from one job to another is approximately every 12 months. As with other branches in the Operations CF, the goal is to develop generalists. Officers qualified by training, education, and experience in areas directly related to the employment of land forces.¹⁹ Officers in the Operations CF are the experts in the full spectrum of operations, including the deployment, employment and sustainment of ground forces engaged in armed combat with an enemy force.²⁰ Unfortunately, this expertise is broad in nature, and not deep in any specific functional area.

KEY FINDINGS AND HIGHLIGHTS OF OPMS XXI.

"OPMS XXI Task Force was convened by the CSA in July 1996. General Reimer instructed the Task Force to review and update the current OPMS to ensure that the system continues to develop officers to meet the challenges of a changing world--officers who can fight and win today's wars and wars of an uncertain future."²¹ Some of the key findings of the Task Force are as follows:

- There was a significant disconnect in the number of authorizations vice the available inventory (managed under Defense Officer Personnel Management Act---DOPMA). The number of TDA authorizations had gradually risen to a level that left units significantly undermanned (70 % or lower), and also forced an unacceptable rate of turnover in the key branch qualification (BQ) positions.²²
- About two thirds of combat arms field grade officers were serving outside their basic branch, and most combat support arms (CSA) and combat service support (CSS) officers were serving primarily in branch-related jobs, seldom getting the opportunity to serve in a functional area or branch immaterial position.
- There was a chronic shortfall of FG officers within the CSA and CSS branches, and there was no mechanism to cross level officers from the CA branches to support the CSA CSS FG authorizations.²³

As discussed above, one of the fundamental changes instituted by OPMS XXI was the decision to assign all Army Competitive Category (ACC) officers to one of the designated career fields of Operations, Operations Support, Information Operations, and Institutional Support after

they have been selected for promotion to the grade of major. This process provides a mechanism to ensure a better alignment of authorizations and available inventory across the Army. It also better enables the army to develop functional and systems specialists, and it allows officers to compete for promotion to LTC and colonel with other officers within their respective career fields.²⁴

For the Military Intelligence branch, these changes have had little effect on the overall nature of MI officer development and career progression. As mentioned above, one of the problems prior to OPMS XXI was the “chronic shortfall” of FG officers within the CSA and CSS branches. Hence, there was pervasive upward grade substitution. This factor was compounded at the corps and below units by the “must fill” joint billet requirements at the MI FG level. Lieutenants were filling captains jobs, and captains were filling majors jobs. Additionally, some MI majors were still getting assigned to FA assignments, and branch immaterial assignments further reducing the available inventory to serve within the Operations CF positions. Under OPMS XXI, the number of CA officers filling FA (other than Operations CF) positions, such as foreign area officers (FA 48) and strategic intelligence officers (FA 34) will increase, reducing the demand on MI officers to fill these positions. This “balance” is intended to increase the MI officer inventory to fill corps and division level authorizations. At the division level there are between 8-11 authorized MI major positions depending on whether it is two or three infantry brigade division. In addition to the MI battalion S3 and XO positions, other MI major positions are at brigade level primary staff intelligence officers (S2), the Division G2 plans officer, G2 operations officer, the Analysis and Control Element (ACE) chief, and the deputy G2. Prior to OPMS XXI, the priority for fill normally went to the MI battalion ACE chief, S3 and XO positions, and the division G2 staff positions. Captains were filling the brigade S2 positions, and unless more captains were assigned to the division than were authorized, lieutenants were filling some of the authorized captains positions. Under OPMS XXI, this dynamic should change. The available inventory for MI majors to serve in authorized MI positions at the division level should increase.

Unfortunately, an increase of Operations CF MI majors in corps and divisions will further aggravate the “rotational turmoil” that already exists. Increasing the number of MI majors in these organizations, increases the demand for the key MI battalion S3 or XO positions. Additionally, within the Operations CF the selection for attendance to the Senior Service College (SSC), and subsequent promotion to colonel is based on the successful completion of a LTC level command. Key to selection for LTC level command is the successful completion of an assignment as a battalion or brigade XO or S3. These facts have not changed under OPMS

XXI. Therefore the annual rotation of MI majors within corps and division organizations will not only continue, the burden of managing this rotation and ensuring every deserving MI major is given the opportunity to remain competitive will increase.

Another distinguishing highlight of OPMS XXI is the inequitable nature of career progression within the Operations CF. The criterion for BQ as a major and LTC is different for some of the combat arms branches and the CSS or CSA branches. For the CA branches, battalion or brigade S3 or XO positions are required to be considered BQ. For SF and aviation branches, company command, as a major is included. For the CSS and CSA branches, numerous other staff positions are sufficient to be BQ. For MI officers, the likelihood of being selected to LTC level command is non-existent if one has not successfully served as an XO or S3 in the grade of major.²⁵ Additionally, as mentioned earlier, the BQ criteria for MI lieutenant colonels in the Operations CF is to serve a minimum of 24 months in any MI coded 35 staff intelligence position. For infantry, armor, and air defense branches, the BQ criterion is the successful completion of battalion command.²⁶ Aviation and field artillery branches include battalion command as one of the positions available as BQ criteria. If a MI LTC in the Operations CF does not successfully serve as a battalion commander, then the officer will not be competitive for selection to attend the SSC, or be competitive for promotion to colonel. The requirements levied on the Army's officers within the Operations CF to be considered BQ are not the same, but the measurement of success within the Operations CF is the same. In essence, there are two different career path requirements within the same career field.

One of the MI related outgrowths of OPMS XXI was the creation of strategic intelligence functional area (FA 34) as part of the Information Operations (IO) career field. As with other "non" Operations CF functional areas (FA), the FA 34 was established to assist the Army in its efforts to balance inventory to force structure authorizations/requirements. In essence, there were too many FG officers within the CA branches for the authorizations/requirements within the force structure. Consequently, the BQ requirement to successfully serve as a battalion/brigade S3 or XO requires branches to rotate these positions every 12 months to ensure as many as possible were BQ by the time the LTC promotion board met. To do otherwise, would result in many FG combat arms officers not being BQ by the time they were considered for promotion to LTC. The creation of three additional career fields and all of the functional areas within them as designed under OPMS XXI, was intended to meet the "specialist" related requirements/authorizations at the FG level, and resolve the combat arms inventory force structure mismatch.²⁷

FA 34 was established to meet the specialized needs for strategic intelligence analysis and collection operations. The FA 34 officer is intended to be a "world-class Strategic Intelligence specialist." They are assigned to intelligence organizations at echelons above the corps level.²⁸ FA 34 officers will serve successive assignments at the strategic level with the goal of becoming technically competent in all aspects of strategic intelligence. Thus far, approximately 80 percent of the officers designated FA 34 are being assessed from the MI basic branch. In other words, 20 percent of the FA 34 CF consists of officers with little to no intelligence related background or experience.²⁹ Unfortunately, it was not the intent of the OPMS XXI Task Force for the majority of these positions to be filled by MI officers. As the majority of MI officers fill these FA 34 requirements, it not only fails to address the inventory problems within the CA branches; it further exacerbates the MI FG officer shortage within the Operations CF.³⁰ The Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCS PER) and the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence (DCS INT), have recognized this problem and indications are that future CFD boards will dramatically reduce the number of MI officers selected for FA 34.³¹

It appears that the future of FA 34, the "world-class Strategic Intelligence specialist," will consist of primarily FG officers that spent their company grade years as combat arms officers or any other branches that have a reduced number of authorizations/requirements within the force structure at the FG level. If the DCS PER and DCS INT are successful in meeting the OPMS XXI CFD intent, then theoretically there will be a greater number of MI officers to fill the Operations CF MI officer force structure requirements/authorizations. Although this may alleviate the chronic case of grade upward substitution (captains filling majors positions and lieutenants filling captains positions), as discussed above, it will also increase the number of MI majors competing for the critical battalion S3 or XO positions to ensure they remain competitive for battalion (LTC level) command. This dynamic will further aggravate an already constricted career progression timeline. It will also see the emergence of a strategic intelligence specialist (FA 34) with little intelligence experience.

INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT IN THE 21ST CENTURY

"Responding to the Full Spectrum of Crises. The US military will be called upon to respond to crises across the full range of military operations, from humanitarian assistance to fighting and winning major theater wars (MTW), and conducting concurrent smaller-scale contingencies. Our demonstrated ability to rapidly respond and to decisively resolve crises provides the most effective deterrent and sets the stage for future operations if force must be used. Should deterrence fail, it is imperative that the United States be able to defeat aggression of any kind. Especially important is the ability to deter or defeat nearly simultaneous large-scale, cross-border aggression in two distant theaters in

overlapping time frames, preferably in concert with allies. The ability to rapidly defeat initial enemy advances short of their objectives in two theaters in close succession reassures our allies and ensures the protection of our worldwide interests. We must also be prepared to conduct several smaller-scale contingency operations at the same time, as situations may dictate the employment of US military capabilities when rapid action is required to stabilize a situation.”³²

The National Military Strategy (NMS) derives its guidance from the National Security Strategy that purports the concept of global engagement. Due to the changes in the international security system, and the subsequent shift to a CONUS based Army, the current NMS relies on force projection rather than the Cold War strategy that was generally based on forward presence.³³ Force Projection operations require joint forces to deploy from garrisons to a crisis location.³⁴ There is no indication that the fundamentals of this strategy of global engagement will change at any time in the foreseeable future.

The ability to fully understand the nature of the threat and the environment is significantly reduced under a strategy that requires the military to maintain a global orientation and maintain the ability to deploy from the United States to respond to a crisis.³⁵ The principles of intelligence support to force projection operations are: the commander drives intelligence; intelligence synchronization; tactical tailoring; broadcast dissemination; and split-based operations. The G2/S2 is the commander’s executive for intelligence support. The G2/S2 is responsible for the management, direction and coordination of the commander’s intelligence effort.³⁶ The competency of the intelligence staff officer (G2/S2) for the deploying tactical commander under a force projection military has never been more critical. The G2/S2 must be capable of taking the commanders priority intelligence requirements (PIR), and backward planning the collection efforts to ensure these critical requirements are being satisfied at the right time and at the right place (intelligence synchronization). The G2/S2 must be able to understand the environment to ensure the right IEW support is made available (tactical tailoring). The G2/S2 must be able to integrate national, theater and tactical systems that facilitate intelligence support from a number of different echelons (broadcast dissemination and split-based operations).³⁷

Another important characteristic of intelligence support to a force projection military is its initial reliance on strategic and theater level intelligence organizations. At the outset of operations, the front line commander will rely on national and theater level intelligence organizations to support and satisfy his intelligence requirements. Tactical commanders will not have a viable capability to collect and produce tactical level intelligence until the force has been deployed, and operations are underway. However, at the outset of operations they will need

intelligence support with detailed tactical resolution. The strategic community providing this “top-fed” intelligence support must fully understand the information requirements of the tactical commanders and their units as they plan, prepare, conduct, and terminate operations.³⁸ Unfortunately, under OPMS XXI, the cracks between the tactical and strategic intelligence communities are likely to grow. As discussed earlier, the accession and developmental paths for both communities do not complement each other for these types of military operations. The Army coded positions responsible for analysis and collection management operations at the strategic level are now being or will be filled by strategic intelligence functional area (FA 34).³⁹ As mentioned earlier, this functional area will consist primarily of officers with little intelligence experience, let alone tactical intelligence experience.

A key element for the Army as prescribed in Joint Vision 2020 is the demand for “full spectrum dominance.” The Army, in conjunction with the other Services, must be capable of conducting successful operations across the entire spectrum of conflict.⁴⁰ From high intensity conflict to humanitarian operations, G2/S2 must fully understand the operational threats across the entire spectrum of conflict. In a force projection military that requires “full spectrum dominance,” G2/S2 must be capable of understanding all potential threats, the right mixes of collection assets to acquire information on these potential threats, and how to apply and synchronize these assets to ensure the commander’s intelligence requirements are being satisfied. The potential threats for a humanitarian or peacekeeping operation, and the collections assets used to acquire information on these threats are significantly different from the threats and appropriate collection assets seen in a high intensity conflict during a major theater war (MTW).

The nature of intelligence support to force projection operations requires that the Army redefine intelligence readiness. Intelligence readiness means that tactical intelligence officers must have a broad knowledge on priority contingency areas, ensure that those databases are updated daily, and be prepared to surge in support of emerging missions. The G2/S2 must direct the intelligence effort daily to ensure the databases will be there upon alert to support contingency planning and execution. The Army’s tactical forces must remain ready to project itself across a very broad spectrum of contingencies. This requirement places a greater demand on the Army’s intelligence operating system at an even higher level of readiness. To maintain that level of readiness, the G2/S2 must provide commanders with routine, direct, and habitual links into the intelligence system to provide and, perhaps more important, to focus intelligence on their tactical and operational needs early.⁴¹ The demands on tactical intelligence

staff officers (G2/S2) required to provide intelligence in order to support full spectrum dominance, utilizing a force projection military strategy, cannot be overstated.

Another important aspect to future military operations, and specifically intelligence support to these operations is the relevance and criticality of information technology. The Army's "Intelligence Vision XXI" is:

"To provide the Ground Component Commander, in a Joint environment, with a knowledge based, prediction oriented Intelligence system, supporting the commander driven requirements of an information age Power Projection Army (Force XXI) capable of land force dominance across the continuum of 21st Century military operations. At the center of this vision are quality soldiers, leaders, and civilians soldiers, leaders, and civilians whose potential is more closely realized by Information Technology assisting in the collection, production and the presentation of Intelligence, providing the Commander with an understanding of the battlefield, or environment of military operations, and the ability to dominate information."⁴²

Information technology (IT) forms the bases for the intelligence operating system's ability to support the Army's Force XXI. Successful intelligence support to the Force XXI warfighters will be based on its ability to leverage IT. Through the use of information processing systems to a myriad of communications architectures, future competencies of intelligence will grow. These competencies will correspond to new technology and systems that result from the development of Force XXI.⁴³ Information technology is expected to make a thousandfold advance over the next 20 years.⁴⁴ Again, as the commander's executive for intelligence support, the G2/S2 will be expected to not only understand the changes in IT as they occur, they will be expected to manage and influence these changes to ensure that Army intelligence optimizes its use.

SUGGESTED CAREER MODEL FOR MILITARY INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS

As specified by the OPMS XXI Task Force, OPMS XXI is an evolutionary process. An important element of the "system" is the aspect of cyclically reviewing its efficacy to ensure it is fully meeting the needs of the Army. As we enter the 21st century, we need to seriously consider the manner in which we develop tactical military intelligence officers to meet the demands of our military, a transformed military that is designed to satisfy the demands of a "force projection" strategy. Joint Vision 2020 demands a military that sustains the element of "full spectrum dominance." The current career model for tactical intelligence officers falls short of developing these officers to successfully satisfy the expectations for intelligence support to the warfighters. The current career model for tactical military intelligence officers as members of the Operations CF is designed and optimized to build commanders. It fails to overcome some of the deficiencies identified by the OPMS XXI Task Force. It falls short of developing the

skills required to serve as the commander's executive agent for intelligence support (G2/S2) in the 21st century. It falls short of developing the skills required to sufficiently satisfy the intelligence requirements for full spectrum dominance in a force projection military. It fails to take into consideration the management challenges for intelligence support that is totally reliant on IT, and the revolutionary changes that will occur in IT in the years to come. Based on these shortcomings, the Army needs to review how it develops tactical MI officers that must employ highly specialized and technical skills.

A suggested career model would incorporate the same principles established for the development of specialists or functional experts as envisioned by OPMS XXI. Specifically, the Army needs to reduce the number and variety of assignment demands on accessed tactical intelligence specialists, and give them more time to focus on the skills critical to providing tactical intelligence support to the commander in a force projection military.⁴⁵ A suggested career path would create a Tactical Intelligence functional area (call it FA 33) as part of the Information Operations career field. Tactical intelligence specialists (FA33) would be assessed following the first 3-4 year tour as a basic branch officer. A suggested career model for tactical intelligence specialists (FA 33) is as follows:

LIEUTENANTS:

Make no changes to how it currently assesses lieutenants. Some will immediately enter the MI basic branch, and some will serve in the branch detail. Lieutenants should seek leadership positions in troop units whenever possible. These positions help to educate junior officers on Army operations and military life.⁴⁶ The optimum development would be to serve in both a leadership position with supervisory responsibilities such as a platoon leader or section leader, and serve as an assistant primary staff officer at the battalion or brigade level.

CAPTAINS:

Upon selection for promotion to the rank of captain, and prior to attendance to the captains career course, the Army will assess tactical intelligence specialists (FA 33). Identifying prospective tactical intelligence specialists will require a general set of criteria or certain professional characteristics. Specifically, tactical intelligence specialists should have a demonstrated aptitude for analysis, an aptitude for information technology, and solid communications skills. The number of officers assessed into this functional area will be based on organizational requirements or authorizations that have a demonstrated need or duty description for tactical intelligence specialists. Specifically, these authorizations will be based on the number of authorized S2/G2 related staff positions such as assistant S2, S2, and ACE

section leaders. These positions would be coded as specialist positions, and filled by designated tactical intelligence specialists. Those MI officers not designated as specialists will remain in the Operations CF. These "command-track" officers will fill positions such as company command, and other non-S2/G2 related positions such as S1, S4, BMO, and assistant S3 positions coded for Operations CF MI officers (CF 35). In essence, the total number of MI officers will not change. Some will be designated as tactical intelligence specialists (FA 33) and others as Operations CF MI officers (generalists). The captains career course will be designed to train officers on Army and basic branch common core technical and tactical skills, with a module that is focused on those tasks associated with the types of jobs expected within both career fields (tactical intelligence specialist CF and MI Operations CF). For example, tactical intelligence specialists will receive greater training on current information technologies being used (or developed), they would receive a more concentrated module on national to tactical collection platforms or assets, and the process to leveraging these assets at the tactical level. The Operations CF MI officers will receive training on those skills associated with command. They will also receive training on current IT being used to support intelligence operations, and intelligence collection and productions processes, but at a more basic level. Additionally, all officers will continue to attend the 6-week staff process phase (CAS3) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Following graduation from the captains career course, tactical MI specialists will be assigned to corps or below organizations. The number assigned will be based on the total authorized number of S2/G2 related positions (coded FA33) for captains. These officers will be assigned against battalion S2, brigade assistant S2 positions, or ACE section leader positions (All-source sections, single source sections or collection management sections). Due to the separation of "specialist" and Operations CF MI officers, the number of officers competing for command (and those positions that line officers up for command---S1, S4, BMO, etc...) is reduced. The requirement to rotate officers every 12 months based on the need to give all deserving officers a command opportunity, is eliminated. This allows for greater stabilization in specific positions, and a change to BQ criterion. Under this model, BQ criteria for tactical MI specialists will be to serve a minimum of 24 months as a battalion S2 or brigade assistant S2, and 12 months as an ACE section leader. Based on time in grade for captains, and the ODP or authorizations for these S2/G2 related positions, this is a reasonable BQ criterion for the tactical MI specialists. MI Operations CF officers will be assigned to organizations that provide the opportunity to serve as a company commander. At the corps and below organizations, these are within the corps MI brigades or the divisional MI battalions. As a matter of progression, these officers will initially serve as S1, S4, BMO or assistant S3 officers prior to the opportunity

to serve as company commanders. Any of these positions or a combination of these positions are excellent opportunities to prepare officers for those duties associated with company command. BQ criteria for Operations CF MI officers will be successful completion of 24 months as a company commander.

MAJORS:

Promotion to major will require the most dramatic revisions. Currently, there is only one promotion board to major for Army Competitive Category (ACC) branches. Under OPMS XXI, the first centralized board considering IO career field officers, is the command and general staff college board. Under this suggested career model, either a separate "special branch" board similar to those provided to Staff Judge Advocate, medical/dental or Chaplain branches, will be required. Or, detailed guidance will need to be provided to the ACC board members specifying a minimum number of promotions to the grade of major for tactical MI specialists. These numbers will be based on total force structure authorizations for tactical MI specialists for the rank of major, and subsequent ranks of LTC and colonel. Upon selection to the grade of major, a specific number of tactical MI specialists (FA 33) as well as some Operations CF MI officers will be selected to serve in one of the other three career fields. The majority of the MI officers that are assessed as strategic intelligence officers (FA 34) in the Information Operations (IO) CF would logically come from the tactical MI specialists ranks. However, a specific number based on authorizations/requirements will remain tactical MI specialists. Tactical MI specialists in the rank of major will be assigned to corps and below organizations. They will serve in positions such as brigade/group level S2, ACE chief, or division level intelligence staff officer (G2 plans, G2 operations or deputy G2). BQ criteria for tactical MI specialist majors would be a minimum of 24 months as a brigade S2 or 24 months as an ACE chief or division level staff officer. As with captains, the period of time served as a captain (P) to the LTC board (approximately 6 years) and the authorizations/requirements for these positions allow this to be reasonable criteria. Operations CF MI officers would be significantly reduced in corps and division level organizations. The only Operations CF MI officer authorized/required positions at this level are the XO and S3 positions within the MI organizations (MI brigades and battalions). This is equally true for the INSCOM and strategic support organizations. The BQ criteria for these officers would be a minimum of 24 months as an XO or as an S3 or a combination thereof. This would better line up with the goal of OPMS XXI of 24 months within these positions. According to the OPMS XXI Task Force two years was the optimum time for the officer's development, and the overall benefit to the organization.⁴⁷

LIEUTENANT COLONELS:

As with the majors' promotion board, there will need to be some revision to the manner in which we are currently selecting lieutenant colonels for promotion. One approach would be to treat tactical MI specialists as an FA for the Information Operations CF. This would simplify the promotion selection process. However, the authorizations/requirements for tactical MI specialists in the rank of LTC and colonel within corps and below organizations are significantly reduced. At this point, a thorough review of MI coded positions within the force structure will need to be conducted. Within the corps and below organizations, tactical MI specialists in the ranks of LTC and colonel will fill the division G2 positions, and the corps deputy G2, corps ACE chief and corps G2 positions. Other potential authorizations/requirements may be to review some of the analysts, planning and operations positions within the Joint Intelligence Centers (JIC) and some of the national level organizations that play a key role in providing tactical level intelligence to front line commanders in a force projection military. The tactical intelligence specialists under this model are the officers that have been developed to define these requirements, and facilitate responsive satisfaction of these requirements. These officers are best suited to serve as the link between national, strategic and theater level intelligence organizations, and their support to tactical units during crisis response operations. The Operations CF MI officers at the rank of LTC and colonel will fill the battalion and brigade commander requirements. Additionally, the lieutenant colonels are ideal candidates to serve as brigade level XO or deputy commanders in the INSCOM brigades. Lastly, these operations developed officers are good candidates for the MACOM, Army, and joint level branch specific and immaterial staff positions.

COLONELS:

At the rank of colonel, tactical intelligence specialists that have served in successive assignments as the integrators of the intelligence cycle are the future corps level G2 officers. They are the future intelligence plans officers within combatant command headquarters. They are the future JIC directors. They are the future division chiefs at the National Ground Intelligence Center (NGIC) or the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), and other colonel level positions with the responsibility of providing tactical intelligence support to front line commanders in a force projection military. The lines of separation between "strategic" and "tactical" intelligence specialists begin to get blurry---and they should.

This suggested career path for MI officers facilitates a better development of its officers to meet the skill demands of its profession. This career path optimizes the development of the

tactical MI specialist to serve as the premier integrator of each element of the intelligence cycle--plan & direct, collection, processing, producing, and disseminating. The Operations CF MI officer is developed to command the people that are responsible to facilitate each element of the intelligence cycle. This suggested career path enables the MI branch to achieve another one of the key recommendations of the OPMS XXI. Specifically, it balances the FG Operations CF MI officer inventory to those key positions that best prepare officers for battalion and brigade command, as we see within the combat arms (CA) branches of the Operations CF. Operations CF MI officers are able to serve 24 months as S3 or XO, as is currently happening within the CA branches. It aligns the MI Operations career path to that of the CA branches of the Operations CF. Operations CF MI captains will be able to focus on those jobs that best prepare them to serve as company commanders. It enables them to serve as company commanders for 24 months as opposed to the historical 12-month rotation. Designated tactical MI specialists will not have to command, or do those jobs that prepare them for command. They are free to focus on those assignments that fully develop the skills necessary to expertly integrate the intelligence cycle at every echelon. It will better align MI officer development to better meet the tactical intelligence challenges of a force projection military. It better develops officers capable of understanding how to apply and integrate the intelligence cycle across the spectrum of conflict--full spectrum dominance. It better develops officers that are more capable of managing change---especially in the area of information technology. Lastly, it is a career path that best develops the one MI officer position that the Army and MI Branch maintain as the most important intelligence position in the MI corps---the S2/G2.

WHAT ABOUT THE WARFIGHTING EXPERTISE AND “MUDDY BOOT CULTURE”?

One of the major concerns expressed by the senior leadership regarding the increased opportunities of specialization under OPMS XXI, was the possibility that it would diminish the warfighting expertise of the officer corps, especially within the operational/command track ranks. One could make the argument that the suggested career model for MI officers would further aggravate this concern. On the contrary, the suggested career model would support the OPMS XXI goal of enhancing the warfighting capabilities by keeping Operations CF MI officers at the rank of major in S3 or XO positions longer than they are currently able to under the current career model. The goal of OPMS XXI is to afford every officer at the rank of major serving in the Operations CF to serve at least 24 months in a BQ assignment.⁴⁸ OPMS XXI does support the stabilization of CA officers within these critical command track BQ positions, but fails to stabilize the MI officers due to the proportionate inventory to “command track” related BQ

positions. MI officers at the rank of major still have to rotate on the average of every 12 months in order to facilitate the opportunity for all MI officers the opportunity to successfully complete the jobs critical to remaining competitive for LTC level command.

Another concern of the senior leaders was the threat of diminishing the "muddy boot culture" as a result of specialization. Under OPMS XXI, it was envisioned that the first 10 years of an officer's career were critical to instilling the right values and a sense of Army tradition and culture. It was envisioned that during these first 10 years all ACC officers would be given the opportunity to "prove their operational competence." For those senior leaders that believe the above-suggested career model for MI officers would diminish this "muddy boot culture" or negate important operational experience, it is important to keep in mind where this suggested specialization is intended to occur. This is a suggested career model for tactical MI officers. It reduces the number of officers required to follow the traditional command track model, and introduces a specialty track that focuses on developing an expert in the integration of the intelligence cycle at the tactical level. The number of MI officers at the tactical level or for any echelon is not reduced. The biggest difference between the manner in which MI officers are currently being managed and the suggested model is that the number of officers required to do command, and command related jobs is reduced, and a new career field specialty (FA 33) is created. This new career specialty specializes in the integration of each element of the intelligence cycle: the planning and directing of IEW operations; IEW collection operations; the processing of information and data; the production of intelligence; and the dissemination of this intelligence.

Another argument could be made that you cannot be a successful S2 unless you have commanded, or you cannot be a successful commander unless you have been an S2. First of all, not all MI commanders have served as an S2, and very few have served as a company commander before being an S2. The assignment progression for captains within divisions is that most will have served as an S2 before being lined up to command. Additionally, the current force structure does not enable every MI officer the opportunity to serve both as an S2 and as a company commander.

CONCLUSION.

In June 1996, the Chief of Staff of the Army chartered the OPMS XXI Task Force in order to study and recommend changes to the current OPMS. OPMS XXI represents the results of the Task Force. The recommended changes represented by OPMS XXI were to make it iterative and responsive for the 21st century. OPMS XXI is a work in progress.⁴⁹ OPMS XXI will

become better and stronger through successive refinement.⁵⁰ This study is intended to highlight the fact that the changes currently underway in OPMS XXI fail to meet the evolving demands of tactical military intelligence officers. It argues that there is a critical need for the Army's officer management system to provide specialized development of the skills required to serve as an intelligence staff officer at the tactical level.

Changes in OPMS XXI have not altered the manner in which MI officers are developed, especially as company grade officers, and has Operations CF field grade officers. The "typical career path" of an MI officer is designed to develop its officers into leaders that have a broad understanding of all aspects of Army operations. This career path falls short of developing experts at integrating the intelligence process required of the Army's senior intelligence officers in tactical organizations. The inventory of MI officers, the BQ requirements, and the demands to remain competitive in the Operations CF causes position changes, on the average, every twelve months. Changes specified by OPMS XXI Task Force were focused on the officer management challenges associated with the officers within the combat arms branches. Currently, OPMS XXI provides no substantive change to the career patterns of CSS and CSA branches, and specifically the career paths of officers in MI branch.

The nature of a "force projection" military and "full spectrum dominance" as keys elements of the NMS, significantly increases the importance of skills associated with tactical MI officers. The introduction of FA 34 (strategic intelligence) officers within the Information Operations CF, and the manner in which the Army develops tactical MI "generalists" within the Operations CF, may debilitate the Army's ability to support and satisfy the front-line tactical commander's intelligence requirements, especially for a strategy that relies on projecting its military power from bases in the United States.

It is time to develop a career path for the development of tactical MI specialists. A suggested career model is provided that will better meet the intelligence demands of warfighters in a military that project a continental United States (CONUS) based force that is dominant across the spectrum of conflict without dramatically altering the fundamental nature officer development. It is a career model that maintains MI officer development in the Operations CF in order to meet the Army's demand for MI commanders. It is a career model that preserves the warfighting expertise and "muddy boot" culture as a key to MI officer development. It is a career model that provides focused development on tactical MI specialists based on when these specialists are accessed, recognition that certain intelligence staff positions should be coded as authorizations/requirements for tactical MI officer specialists, and providing greater stability within these positions to ensure tactical MI officer specialists become the Army's premier

experts in the integration of the intelligence cycle at every echelon. It is a career model that separates the demands associated with developing commanders versus the demands associated with becoming master integrators of the intelligence cycle. It is a suggested career model that is focused on developing professional S2s, G2s and possibly future J2s capable of providing “robust all-source intelligence” to military commanders as envisioned by the country’s National Military Strategy.

Word Count: 10410

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